

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 125994
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SNM-02 PRS-01 /014 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:PWLANDE/MW

APPROVED BY NEA/PAB:PWLANDE

-----011851Z 026265 /46

O 011838Z JUN 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KABUL IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 125994

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PINT, SNAR, PK

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON NARCOTICS AND
PAKISTAN'S POLITICAL SITUATION

1. WASHINGTON POST OF JUNE 1 CARRIED FOLLOWING STORY:

QUOTE: LIKELY BHUTTO OUSTER COMPLICATES ANTI-DRUG EFFORTS,
MEMO SAYS: UNREST IN PAKISTAN AND THE PROBABLE DOWNFALL OF
PRIME MINISTER ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO COMPLICATED U.S. EFFORTS
TO PREVENT IMPORTATION OF ILLEGAL NARCOTICS FROM SOUTH ASIA,
A WHITE HOUSE STAFFER HAS WARNED IN AN OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM.

"IT IS MY OPINION, SUPPORTED BY BOTH THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND
THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, THAT BHUTTO'S DAYS ARE NUM-
BERED," CHARLES O'KEEFE SAID LAST WEEK IN A MEMO TO HIS
SUPERIORS, DR. PETER BOURNE, PRESIDENTIAL ASSISTANT FOR
DRUG ABUSE AND HEALTH.

"THIS BEING THE CASE, OUR NARCOTICS EFFORTS IN SOUTH ASIA
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WILL IN ALL PROBABILITY SUFFER A SEVERE SETBACK."

THE 13-PAGE MEMO, A COPY OF WHICH WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE
LOS ANGELES TIMES, WAS DEVOTED LARGELY TO U.S. CONCERN THAT
AFGHANISTAN WILL BECOME A MAJOR SUPPLIER OF ILLICIT OPIUM

TO WESTERN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES.

UNTIL RECENTLY AFGHANISTAN HAS NOT BEEN CONSIDERED A POSSIBLE SUPPLIER OF OPIUM TO THE UNITED STATES. BUT AS THE OPIUM SUPPLY IN TURKEY HAS SHRIVELED UNDER A JOINT AMERICAN-TURKISH PROGRAM IN RECENT YEARS, THE CULTIVATION OF POPPIES IN AFGHANISTAN HAS INCREASED DRAMATICALLY AND CAUSED ALARM AMONG AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE OFFICIALS.

PAKISTAN HAS BEEN WRACKED BY POLITICAL VIOLENCE SINCE THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF MARCH 7. BHUTTO'S PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY WON BY A LANDSLIDE IN THE ELECTIONS, BUT THE OPPOSITION PAKISTAN NATIONAL ALLIANCE (PNA) CHARGED VOTE FRAUD.

ALTHOUGH BHUTTO IS KNOWN TO BE IN POLITICAL TROUBLE, U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE NOT PUBLICLY VOICED ANY OPINIONS ABOUT HIS ABILITY TO SURVIVE THE CURRENT TURMOIL.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND PAKISTAN COOLED SHARPLY JUST OVER A MONTH AGO WHEN BHUTTO ACCUSED THE AMERICANS IN GENERAL AND THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY IN PARTICULAR OF SEEKING TO OVERTHROW HIM.

MORE RECENTLY, AS BHUTTO'S OWN POSITION IN PAKISTAN SEEMED TO IMPROVE, THE ANTI-U.S. CAMPAIGN MODERATED AND SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS R. VANCE TUESDAY MET IN PARIS WITH PAKISTAN FOREIGN MINISTER AZIZ AHMED IN AN EFFORT TO OPEN A MORE NORMAL DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN ISLAMABAD.

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AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, OFFICIALS WERE EXTREMELY APPREHENSIVE WHEN INFORMED THAT O'KEEFE'S ASSESSMENT OF BHUTTO'S FUTURE HAD BEEN DISCLOSED.

O'KEEFE WROTE THAT IF BHUTTO IS OUSTED, PAKISTAN'S EXISTING NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT PROJECT, FUNDED PRIMARILY BY THE UNITED STATES, WOULD SUFFER A SETBACK FOR TWO PRIMARY REASONS:

-- THE OPPOSITION PNR DERIVES CONSIDERABLE SUPPORT FROM THE REGION OF SMALL FARMERS WHO DEPEND UPON GROWING OPIUM POPPIES AND WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO CONTINUE ENFORCING OPIUM LAW.

-- THE PNA COULD BE EXPECTED EITHER TO FIRE OR IGNORE RAOUF ALI, BHUTTO'S DIRECTOR OF THE PAKISTAN NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD.

EVEN IF BHUTTO SURVIVES AS PRIME MINISTER, O'KEEFE SAID,

HE COULD BE EXPECTED TO MAKE "FAR REACHING CONCESSIONS"
TO THE PNA THAT WOULD WEAKEN ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS.

END QUOTE

2. DEPARTMENT HAS PREPARED THE FOLLOWING PRESS BRIEFING
PAPER:

QUOTE: STATE DEPARTMENT VIEW OF BHUTTO'S SURVIVAL

Q. IS IT TRUE, AS STATED IN A WHITE HOUSE STAFF MEMO,
THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND NSC BELIEVE THAT PAKISTANI
PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO'S DAYS IN POWER ARE NUMBERED?

A. THE REPORTED VIEW OF MR. O'KEEFE IS A PERSONAL
OPINION. IT IN NO WAY REFLECTS THE VIEW OF THE STATE
DEPARTMENT AND NSC.
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Q. WELL, WHAT IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT VIEW?

A. THE POLITICAL FUTURE OF THE PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN IS A
DOMESTIC MATTER FOR THEM TO DECIDE. BEYOND THAT, I HAVE
NOTHING TO SAY.

REGARDING U.S. AND PAKISTANI RELATIONS GENERALLY,
PLEASE NOTE THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS AFTER HIS MEETING IN
PARIS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER AHMED: "WE VALUE GREATLY THE
LONG AND CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WE HAVE HAD WITH THE PAKISTANI
AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING THAT RELATIONSHIP IN
THE FUTURE. WE SHALL DO ALL WE CAN TO FOSTER AND SUPPORT
OUR FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES."

END QUOTE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, TEXT, DRUG CONTROL, POLITICAL SITUATION, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 01-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE125994
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PWLANDE/MW
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770195-0443
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197706102/aaaadkwx.tel
Line Count: 157
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 07dd0773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1999897
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE ON NARCOTICS AND PAKISTAN'S POLITICAL SITUATION
TAGS: PINT, SNAR, SOPN, PK, THE WASHINGTON POST
To: ISLAMABAD KABUL
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/07dd0773-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009